

Dear Fellowship Partners,

update april 2010



I sought the Lord, and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame. Psalm 34:4-5

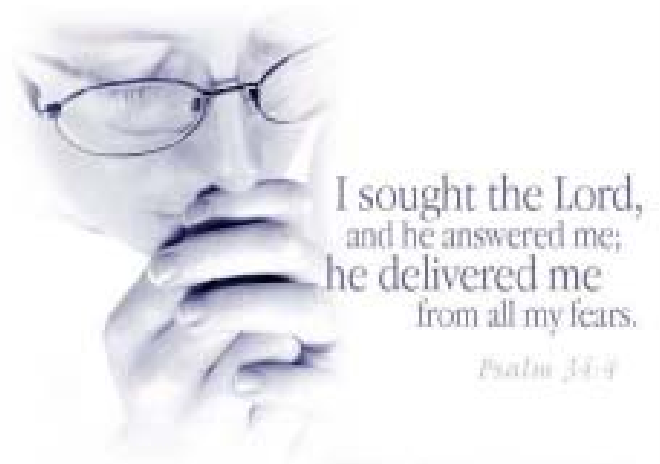
I love the profound truth of God's love in these verses. To me these verses speak of a God who meets us in our deepest needs, and answers without shaming or belittling our fears. God knows our stories. He knows the pain, rejection, abuse, neglect, and shame we have experienced in our lives. He is not only *able* to deliver us, but *desires* to redeem us and transform our lives.

The difficulty is that we have formed deep-seated beliefs over time, and now make choices in response to those beliefs. We believe we are unloved, worthless, undeserving, and often we find a temporary fix for the pain and shame in our hearts. God wants us to come to know and believe the truth— that he created us loveable, and worthy of having a relationship with him. As we come to believe we are loved by God and have innate worth, we understand that these verses are true. God answers. He delivers. And, as we look to him, our faces are shamelessly radiant in the light of his love.

By the time a person walks through the door of a place like Portland Fellowship they have come to know their pain. They have wrestled with it and are looking for help. *Taking Back Ground* is an amazing program for men and women to interact with the Lord and each other, and to embrace this truth. Yet, many of these deep-seated beliefs cannot get resolved in a group setting. For some, a personal counselor will be a very important part of their process of healing.

We are contacted weekly by men, women, family and friends for referrals to professional counseling; this is why we have put together a list of counselors that agree with our mission statement and methodology. Although there are some great counselors in the area, we know that many cannot afford professional counseling. For this reason, we have always wanted to have an affordable counselor on our team that would help to meet this great need.

I'm excited to share with you, that our desire has been met with the partnership of Multnomah University. Multnomah now has a counseling program which offers student internships throughout the Portland area. Portland Fellowship has just been approved as a site for their counseling interns. One of these student interns, Sharron Schniedewind, has already had a professional relationship with Portland Fellowship and now continues to do so through counseling. Sharon has been approved to intern, and counsel up to 20 hours a week on a very reasonable sliding scale. Sharon shares:



“He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted to proclaim liberty to captives, and freedom to prisoners.”

ISAIAH 61 : 1

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"I grew up under a great amount of 'should'. In order to be loved I was told I should go to church, should be nice to everyone, should never get angry and so on. In time 'should' was used to dictate who I was supposed to become. When doing what I should do was never enough, I was left feeling lonely, worthless, ashamed, and unloved.

In my early twenties I began to hear a different message. Love was not earned by doing what I 'should' do. It just is! This love is relational, allows us to become who we were designed to be, and it is there for every one of us. Once I began to 'get' that God's love just is, the pain in my heart began to heal. Believing that God is looking out for my best interest I have grown in my love for Him. Nothing but good can come from His love.

Unloading the worthlessness and shame has revealed that I am designed with a passion that calls me to share the freedom of being loved without the 'should's' that family, culture, peers, misperceptions, experiences and well-meaning Christians place on us. As a counselor I will be walking alongside people to help them find their worth. I will help them uncover the 'should's' life has buried them under and come to know they are loved."

If you are seeking counseling support, please call for a counseling referral list or consider setting up an intake appointment with Sharon. For further information about our sliding scale, please call the office and ask for Cynthia.



In His service,

Jason Thompson
Executive Director

the hope group

As you may have read in previous newsletters, Portland Fellowship's Family and Friends ministry is now *The Hope Group*. This is a great time of fellowship, learning, sharing, and food! Each month we will be meeting on the third Friday of the month to share a meal, discuss relevant topics, and share our hearts through discussion and prayer. This is a great place to ask questions, share pain, and receive hope and comfort!

If you have a loved one who has adopted a gay identity, or who is struggling with same sex attraction issues, please join us! The topics that we will be discussing for the next six months of the year are...

April - Hope and Expectations
May - Prayer and Intercession
June - Roots of Homosexuality
July - Guilt and Shame
August - Dealing with Pain
September - Forgiveness

Contact drew@portlandfellowship.com for more information.

ways to be involved

Please consider the following opportunities for involvement at Portland Fellowship:

- **Serve on our Board of Directors**
- **Provide food/snacks for our various programs**
- **Share about PF with your church leaders or men's and women's groups**
- **Host a House Party** (dessert and coffee or more) **as we come and share with your friends about PF**
- **Write your story for our newsletter**
- **Help us with janitorial or house repairs and upgrades**
- **Share about PF on your Facebook or blog account**

If you want to learn more about any of these opportunities, please contact us.

portland fellowship is a nonprofit, 501(c)3 nondenominational organization. We are exclusively supported through private donations, support services, and offerings. Thank you for your gifts.

events calendar

april 16

Family and Friends Group
For those who have a loved one involved in homosexuality and want guidance, encouragement, and personal support.
Third Friday of each month: 7 p.m.

tuesday nights

Taking Back Ground
Discipleship program for men and women struggling with unwanted same-sex attractions 7-10 pm

thursday afternoons

Upper Room Community
Intensive training for our Upper Room Community members.

Multnomah University

Undergraduate Class
Onsite visit to Portland Fellowship to learn and experience what PF has to offer.

Check website for additional updates at www.portlandfellowship.com